

locustprojects

3852 North Miami Avenue, Miami, FL 33127

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Locust Projects presents

MAIN GALLERY:

Christina Pettersson:

In the Pines

SCREENING ROOM:

Summer Jade Leavitt:

Language is Leaving Me

Exhibition Dates:

July 8-August 15, 2020

Public Hours:

Wednesday to Saturday

12pm – 6pm; by

appointment only.

Limited per person

capacity; masks and

social distancing

required

LOCUST PROJECTS REOPENS JULY 8 WITH NEW WORK BY CHRISTINA PETTERSSON

ALSO ON VIEW: SUMMER JADE LEAVITT



Photograph by Eli Peck.

[Miami, FL] Closed to the public since March 15, 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Miami's longest-running alternative art space announces its plans for reopening following City and County guidelines on July 8 with two new site-specific large-scale installations by Miami-based artists Christina Pettersson and Summer Jade Leavitt.

In the Pines, a new site-specific immersive installation commissioned by Miami-based artist Christina Pettersson, was originally scheduled to open in the Project Room April 3 and will now open in a larger iteration in the Main Gallery on July 8. The exhibition will remain on view until August 15. Admission is free.

The installation has been reconfigured for the 1,500 square foot Main Gallery, creating a memorial space to pay homage and remember the original pine woods of South Florida and its historical figures and creatures, to which the artist is deeply connected. In transforming the space into a cemetery, the artist's intention is to invite viewers to contemplate and physically and psychically connect with these historical narratives and each individual's

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significance as if speaking with the dead themselves. Each tomb acts as a portal into a forgotten world, providing each visitor with a deeper understanding of South Florida.

The space is haunted by the wafting tune of *In The Pines*, a traditional American folk song of unknown origins dating back to at least the 1870s, famously sung by renown artists like Leadbelly and Kurt Cobain, and covered here by the artist herself and Eli Peck. Like many folk songs, *In The Pines* was passed

along orally, changing throughout the years into hundreds of different versions, but always consistently portraying the pines as a place where one encounter's their own dark soul.

The melody of *In the Pines* surrounding the cemetery is accompanied by the soft crunching sound of footsteps, emanating from a projected video of the artist dressed in Victorian-era mourning wear, traversing the world's last large swath of Pine Rockland forest within the Everglades National Park. Once the preeminent landscape of Miami, the film contemplates its disappearance. Visitors' footsteps echo the artist's as they walk across Florida native pine mulch through the cemetery of handmade gravestones, surrounded by evergreen walls. All are encouraged to make grave rubbings to take home a piece of the exhibition in homage to figures from South Florida's robust forgotten history.

Above the gravesite looms a large-scale, multi-panel apocryphal drawing on wood panels, embedded with gravestone symbolism and carved to resemble a cemetery gate. Depicting a landscape devoid of trees and divided by railroad tracks leading nowhere, Petterson seeks to address and tear down figures like Henry Flagler who engineered destruction on a grand scale for vanity and profit. As Confederate statues at last fall, Petterson's work topples the equally-deserving industrialists.

Flanking the drawing are two crumbling entrance towers, all that remains of the estate of John Sewell, one of Miami's founders, now forgotten on the side of the 195 highway. Mounted on the opposite wall, a large scale map of Miami City Cemetery is decorated with mourning wreaths and clay offering bowls, echoing the walls of a mausoleum.

A séance room in the Project Room invites visitors to peruse the artist's library and sacred objects, take a seat at the table and call upon their own ancestry.

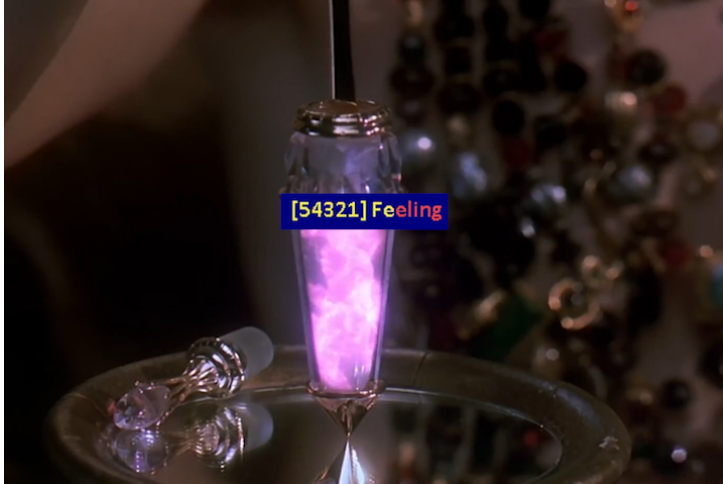
In the Pines celebrates South Florida's history by mourning what has been lost while also taking back the cemetery for the living. A sense of community is strengthened by the act of honoring the dead and exploring their forgotten history.

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Above photo: Eli Peck.



ALSO ON VIEW: SUMMER JADE LEAVITT: *Language is Leaving Me*

Originally scheduled to open in conjunction with Pride Month, Summer Jade Leavitt's project in the Screening Room, *Language is Leaving Me*, is a new multimedia installation reckoning with heteropatriarchal structures that disseminate through the body in language, time, and memory. The project transforms Locust Projects' Screening Room into a dream-like queer bar environment. A pink dentist chair, associated with being unable to talk, an invasion of space, and something put in or

removed from the mouth, sits upon a glowing stage, transforming a site for losing one's ability to speak into a site for performance and a place to locate one's voice.

The installation repurposes karaoke videos as ready-made texts, transforming the songs into a break-up letter with patriarchal languages, refusing to continue carrying those wounds into the body.

Juxtaposing power dynamics between spaces of freedom and those of voicelessness and bodilessness, the work utilizes language as a tool and an expression of one's sense of power and autonomy.

REOPENING GUIDELINES

Locust Projects' public reopening is based upon the City of Miami's implementation of the Stand Up, Miami Reactivation Plan and the County's reopening guidelines for The New Normal phased reopening plan announced on May 20 with the go-ahead for cultural organizations to begin reopening. Locust Projects finalized its comprehensive plan for opening its doors safely and will implement upon opening July 8, following all CDC guidelines and Miami-Dade County, City of Miami, and national government mandates, including limited per-person capacity, required masks, and social distancing measures. Exhibition dates subject to change pending local safety guidelines for cultural organization reopenings. Visit locustprojects.org for the latest information.

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS



CHRISTINA PETTERSSON

Born in Stockholm, Sweden, Christina Pettersson has lived in Miami, FL most of her life. Her last two solo exhibitions, in Everglades National Park and at the historic Deering Estate on Biscayne Bay, reflect her lifelong passions in her hometown.

Recent shows include the Perez Art Museum Miami (PAMM),

Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami, Girls Club, Fort Lauderdale, the Art and Culture Center of Hollywood, FL, Launch F18, New York, NY. She has exhibited at other museums, particularly in the South, such as the Birmingham Museum of Art, AL, Columbus Museum of Art, GA, Baltimore Museum of Art, MD, Wiregrass Museum of Art, AL, and the Naples Museum of Art, FL. Her work is in major collections locally, such as the PAMM, Martin Z. Margulies at the Warehouse, Deborah & Dennis Scholl, Frances Bishop Good & David Horvitz, and throughout the country.

She has received the South Florida Cultural Consortium Fellowship thrice, the largest regionally sponsored grant in the US. She received a Fulbright Grant to return to Sweden in 2000, attending the Valand School of Fine Arts in Gothenburg. She has attended residencies at Yaddo, Ucross, Vermont Studio Center, VCCA, The Studios of Key West, Atlantic Center for the Arts Master Program under Inka Essenhigh, and a yearlong program at the Deering Estate. Taking her to remote and historic places, they have a profound effect on her work. Most influentially she spent a month inside Everglades National Park under the AIRIE residency program in 2015. This residency solidified her desire to focus her artwork on the combination of her local environment, history and community outreach.

Pettersson has curated and staged group performances and public programming throughout her native South Florida. In conjunction with exhibitions and organizations such as AIRIE, Girls Club, and various historical entities she collaborates to bring these themes to life in the community- thru walking and bus tours of neighborhoods, cemeteries and the local environment, guest lectures, workshops, book clubs, even shadow puppet performances. These events have allowed Pettersson's work to become a true engagement with the community, dissolving boundaries, utilizing the talents of a variety of people and organizations with limited resources, and educating and delighting by innovative means.

Above photo: Eli Peck.

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SUMMER JADE LEAVITT

Summer Jade Leavitt is an artist and writer whose work considers what queer future looks like. Through text, photo, artifacts, and video, she approaches everyday life as a site for performance, documenting gestures large and small to archive and historicize them. Looking at pop culture, history, music videos, film, and theory, she aims to confuse lineages and authenticity. Her performative existence is a sci-fi documentary: all real, all fake. She seeks to locate origins of trauma and excavate them from the body, creating space for all that has been lost, and all that is yet to come.

Summer Jade Leavitt's publications include *Mad Girl's Crush Tweet*, published by Headmistress Press; "Carol" published by Poets.org; and "Carol", "Carol Too", "Remains", and "This is Not Fiction", published by The Oakland Review. Leavitt's work has been exhibited at many galleries and museums nationwide, with recent exhibitions including: *Possible Bodies*, Phosphor Project Space, Pittsburgh, PA (2019); *Nearest Neighbors*, Powder Room, Pittsburgh, PA (2019); Headmistress Press AWP reading at *Like Nobody's Business*, Portland, OR (2019); *The Self, Realized: Queering the Art of Self-Portraiture*, Brew House Association, Pittsburgh, PA (2019); *Ten Futures*, 937 Gallery, Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, Pittsburgh, PA (2019); *Erotica Night*, Bunker Projects, Pittsburgh, PA (2019); *Matter & Memory Group Show*, The Factory at Bard, Berlin, DE (2018); *Dot Gov*, Miller Institute of Contemporary Art, Pittsburgh, PA (2018); *ephemera*, Future Tenant, Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, Pittsburgh, PA (2018); *Erotica Night*, Bunker Projects, Pittsburgh, PA (2018); *We Have a Future, Perhaps*, The Frame at Carnegie Mellon, Pittsburgh, PA (2017); "Untitled (Making Myself into a Monument)", Pittsburgh Performance Art Festival, Pittsburgh, PA (2017); *The Kitchen Sink*, 3577 Studios, Pittsburgh, PA (2017); *Power & The Soul*, The Frame at Carnegie Mellon, Pittsburgh PA (2017); *Be Somebody With A Body*, The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, PA (2016); *Nightmare*, The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, PA (2016); *From The Dream To The Cosmos*, The Frame at Carnegie Mellon, Pittsburgh, PA (2016); *Stairwell Show*, School of Visual Arts, New York, NY (2014); *Scholastic Gold Key Winners*, Miami Art Museum, Miami, FL (2013); *Senior Showcase*, Artseen, Miami, FL (2013); *Works of Eight*, New World Gallery, Miami, FL (2011); *Fluxus*, Culture Center, Chicago, IL (2011); *Showcase*, Grossman Gallery, Boston, MA (2011).

ABOUT LOCUST PROJECTS

Founded by artists for artists in 1998, Locust Projects is Miami's longest running nonprofit alternative art space. We produce, present, and nurture ambitious and experimental new art and the exchange of ideas through commissioned exhibitions and projects, artist residencies, summer art intensives for teens, and public programs on contemporary art and curatorial practice. As a leading incubator of new art and ideas, Locust Projects emphasizes boundary-pushing creative endeavors, risk-taking and experimentation by local, national and international artists. We invest in South Florida's arts community by providing artists with project grants and empower creative careers by supporting the administrative work of being an artist through an onsite artist resource hub and access to pro bono legal services.

Locust Projects 2019-2020 exhibitions and programming are made possible with support from: The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation; The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; The Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners; The National Endowment for the

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ART HAPPENS HERE.